



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE EXTENDS COMMENT PERIOD ON DRAFT IMPACT STATEMENT ON OPERATION OF REFUGE SYSTEM

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has extended for 1 month the comment period on a draft environmental impact statement reviewing management of the Nation's 448 national wildlife refuges.

"Because of the widespread public interest in this document, the Service wants to ensure all interested parties are given adequate time to review thoroughly the Service's proposals and to submit their comments," said Frank Dunkle, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Initially, the comment period was to end March 13, 1989. The closing date will now be April 13, 1989.

The draft statement evaluates four "alternatives" for managing habitat and public use on national wildlife refuges. Highlights of the four alternatives are as follows:

#### Alternative A:

The current management program. Allows for a variety of management options and encourages opportunities for compatible wildlife-oriented recreation.

(over)

**Alternative B:**

Would expand multiple-use opportunities and allow more non-wildlife-oriented recreation such as swimming, picnicking, and camping.

**Alternative C:**

No management. Eliminate management practices so as not to interfere with natural habitat succession and the natural abundance, distribution, and composition of wildlife populations. Consumptive uses such as hunting, fishing, and berry-picking would not be allowed. Public use would be limited to non-consumptive activities such as birdwatching, and would be concentrated at refuge visitor centers.

**Alternative D:**

Similar to approach of Alternative A except that the taking, capture, or killing of any animal would be prohibited except when necessary for the safety of persons or property.

Copies of the report may be obtained from: National Wildlife Refuge EIS Team, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Room 2343, Main Interior Building, Washington, DC 20240; telephone: 202/343-4944. Comments should be sent to the same address.